

Romulus Community Schools

Early Release Days and Professional Learning Communities

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

August, 2011

Why is Romulus Community Schools going to a one hour "early release" schedule for Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) this year?

Romulus Community Schools is striving to improve student learning for all students. In order for teachers to develop assessments and instructional strategies to reach all learners, the school district designated time to allow for teachers at all grade levels and across schools to collaborate. To implement this time, the schools will have a one hour early release on designated Tuesdays throughout the 2011-2012 school year, where students will be released from school one hour early.

Please visit the Romulus Community Schools website at <http://www.romulus.net> for the school calendar including early release days.

Boys and Girls Club will run additional programming on these days and buses will run one hour earlier on the designated early release 2nd and 4th Tuesdays.

Is the High School released early on the same days as the other schools?

Yes. A survey of our community showed that having all schools release early on the same day will be the most convenient scenario for our families. All schools will release one hour earlier than their regular time on all designated 2nd and 4th Tuesdays.

Will the buses still take my child home?

Yes. School buses will drop off students, at their regular bus stops, one hour earlier than their regular schedule on designated 2nd and 4th Tuesdays.

What will teachers be doing during the one hour PLC early release?

National research supports that teachers working in collaboration with one another to improve student learning results in more learning for all students. Teachers will be working in grade level or content teams by subject area to identify common agreements on what all students should know and be able to do as a result of a class or course; develop common assessments to measure student progress on those standards; identify students that need additional time and support; and identify options for students that have already met the standards. Teaching is generally an isolated profession throughout the nation and Romulus Community Schools is working to improve student learning by developing a more collaborative culture.

Who do I call if I have specific questions about what my student's school is doing?

Call the building principal at your child's school.

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Where can parents and other interested parties review the goals, objectives, and measurements of effectiveness regarding this program?

Professional Learning Communities (PLC) are a research-based model for collaboration. The District Strategic Improvement Plan, which can be found on the Romulus Community Schools website <http://www.romulus.net>, identifies specific goals and objectives for measuring the district progress on improving student learning. Additional information on professional learning communities can be found at www.allthingsplac.info.

When do the one hour PLC early releases begin in Romulus?

One hour PLC early releases will begin in all Romulus Community Schools on Tuesday, September 13th 2011, and continue through May 22, 2012. Please see the district calendar for early release dates.

Are there any other schedule or calendar changes for Romulus Community Schools in the 2011-12 school year?

Yes. Romulus Community Schools have removed five ½ days from the school calendar thus providing more uninterrupted instructional time.

What are the Essential Standards and what do they mean for my student?

Essential Standards are defined as the state standards that are critical for student success. Through the identification of Essential Standards, teachers teach the most critical standards in the order of priority. Essential Standards identify the guaranteed curriculum and standards that will be taught for each student, regardless of which classroom they are in.

I have an elementary age student that may need child care during the one hour PLC early release days. How do I get information on local daycares?

Each elementary school as well as the middle school has a list of local day care providers in their office. In additions, RCS has worked out an arrangement with Boys and Girls Club so that parents who need childcare for their children on early release days can send their children to the Boys and Girls Club after school program that is currently being housed at Wick Elementary on those early release days. Students must be registered with Boys and Girls Club. If you need more information about Boys and Girls Club, call (734) 641-3382.

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Can I come and see what the teachers are doing during their PLC time?

Yes. Beginning in October 2011, you may contact your student's principal to set up a visitation.

Is there any additional costs to the district for this program and from which budget is it being paid?

The Professional Learning Community (PLC) early release is cost neutral.

Who monitors the programs to ensure that 100% of the meeting time is used for this program and not used for unrelated business?

Principals at each school maintain the agendas and minutes from each of the PLC teams within their schools. These documents are also monitored at the district level and the school district has a system for measuring progress.

Where can parents review information that demonstrates such programs have had an impact on student learning when used in other districts?

Two frequently updated websites include: www.allthingsplac.info and www.plcWASHINGTON.org identify school districts that have used the PLC model to improve student learning.

How will the district make up this time to students to comply with state requirements for instructional hours and days?

Romulus Community Schools meets the requirements for instructional hours and days as established by the Michigan Department of Education.
